

Further Notes on the Purification Chain (from “Aesthetics Pt. 1”)

Will must take its predominant place in the higher arts over Idea because it is the existence of the world as Will which necessitates art— not the phenomenological lightning-bolt around modern philosophy from Descartes forward, but the existential forms of consciousness around the principle of sufficient reason— competition, conflict, rancor, discord, or even the harmonies between wills which form the inverse of this.

Idea, or world-as-Idea, purifies raw expressions of individual and individualized will by transcendentalizing it, towards universals and archetypes. World-as-Idea is largely missing from twentieth century art, which lost its sense of the Ideal towards meta-levels of dismemberment and nihilistic exhibitionism— thus, my return to Hamlet, Hamlet’s idealism, as a drastic antidote to a system bent towards expression of the will’s facility and little else. Art desperately needs imperatives derived from above rather than below— to be purified by Primary Ideas, to restore its own Secondary connection to Idea/the ideal.

With the exception of Picasso and a few others, the sense of the Apollonian was lost in twentieth century art. It has to be a Primary Mode on the purification chain because the Apollonian in serious art is another way of saying “history”; and because formal rigor and “history” are so closely correlated as Primary Modes that it is often difficult to disentangle them from each other. The twentieth century was America’s— and, as the creation of America enacted the dissolution of history into socio-linguistic disguises, the twentieth century was compelled to disguise the preponderance of history and formal rigor behind Invention within the chaos of the Dionysian.

Heidegger’s “concealing” for me (and to some extent Buber’s “I-It”) is a metaphor for the adequate objectivity of the work of serious art— that is, the Primacy of concealing over “clearing”— a representation of the horizon of levels of symbolic complexity— symbolic representation is art’s adequate objectivity. Serious art is, and must necessarily be, complex.

If the Purification Chain enacts a purification process within itself, it is because it represents its own aesthetic ethos, assembled to mirror (even spatially) what it assays within the purview of the new century— twentieth century “mirrors” were funhouse mirrors in comparison— even if the chain imposes complex cognition which itself is compelled to mirror (in thought-chains) what saturates it, in both directions (the Purification Chain and the work of art)— so that the ideal energy around the Purification Chain is triangular— and that serious art and aesthetics should substantially enhance and enrich cognition is presupposed.

Twentieth century art is largely cognitively impaired— all its mirroring processes affirm the inventive Dionysian “cleared” of history, but disguised in the American manner by a simulacrum of theoretical rigor; carefully disseminated by the donnees of large fortunes.

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